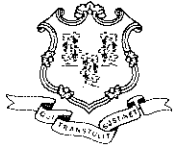


6609



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Testimony by the Department of Higher Education
Before the Human Services Committee
10:00 a.m. – LOB Room 2E
March 3, 2009

**House Bill 6609 (Raised) An Act Establishing a Community Provider Rescue Fund
Account and Community-Based Services Commission**

The Connecticut Commission on Community Service was established in 1993 by an Executive Order of the Governor under the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. The Commission is mandated to recommend innovative and creative statewide community service programs and providers as a strategy to solve community-based problems. The Commission has been functioning in this capacity for more than 16 years. The Department of Higher Education is poised to absorb the responsibilities outlined in Raised Bill No. 6099 and has the relevant years of experience to do it effectively and efficiently.

The structure of the commission raised in Bill No. 6609 mirrors the pre-existing composition of the Connecticut Commission on Community Service. Commission members are appointed by the Governor. They are representatives of certain interests or expertise as expressed in the National and Community Service Trust Act and its implementing regulations. Governor-appointed representatives from the Department of Education, the Department of Administrative Services, the Department of Public Health, the Office of Fiscal Analysis and the Commission on Children, have all served on the Commission. It remains in the governor's purview to appoint any additional state agency representatives to sit on the Commission. The bill includes language specific to the disability community. Please note the Commission on Community Service has a mandated staff position whose sole responsibility is to oversee policies and procedures relating to persons with disabilities, tracking program progress relating to its policies and procedures as well as state and federal laws relating to persons with disabilities, providing consultative services to said programs and serves as the Commission's primary liaison with relevant state and federal agencies. This position is paid with federal funds and does not require a state match.